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A BRIEF RECORD
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Corporation and People of Savannah

IN HONOR OF THE LATE
GENERAL ROBERT EDWARD LEE,

TOGETHER WITH A
EULOGY

ON HIS
LIFE, CHARACTER AND SERVICES,

BY
GENERAL ALEX. R. LAWTON.

SAVANNAH, GA.
GEO. N. NICHOLS' STEAM POWER PRESSES.
1871.

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RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

GENERAL ROBERT EDWARD LEE expired at Lexington, Virginia, at half after 9 o'clock, on the morning of the 12th October, 1870. The intelligence of his death was received at Savannah, at 8½ o'clock in the evening of the same day, and spread with rapidity throughout the community, producing universal and profound sorrow.

The painful event was announced at the several places of amusement open that evening; the performances were immediately discontinued and the people retired in silence, returning with saddened hearts to their homes.

The City Council was in session, and the dispatch which brought the tidings of our great bereavement was communicated to the Board by the Honorable the Mayor. The business of the meeting was instantly arrested. Aldermen Davidson, Haywood and Solomons were appointed a Committee to prepare and report resolutions appropriate to the distressing occasion, and Council adjourned to meet the ensuing morning, at 8 o'clock.

The Report and Resolutions adopted at the adjourned meeting on the 13th instant are embraced in the following Proclamation by his Honor, the Mayor:

PROCLAMATION.

MAYORALTY OF SAVANNAH, }
October 14th, 1870. }

* * * * *

[*Extract from Minutes of Council, October 13, 1870.*]

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED.

The City Council of Savannah, as a body, and individually, have heard with profound grief of the death of General ROBERT E. LEE—a man whose fame belongs to the world, and whose virtues, whilst he lived, and whose memory, now that he is dead, must be cherished in fond recollection, without respect to nation or kindred. To that memory it is due that solemn public and private honors be paid. To that end, therefore, the City Council of Savannah do

Resolve, That the members of this body have heard, with the greatest sorrow, of the death of that eminent soldier and patriot, General ROBERT E. LEE, and that they cherish with lively emotions of respect and veneration the character and virtues of one so noble, so brave, so virtuous.

Resolved, That as a testimonial of respect for the honored dead, the bells of the City be tolled during the entire day of General LEE's interment, and that the citizens of Savannah be requested to close their places of business during the same time.

Resolved, That his Honor, the Mayor, is hereby requested to call a public meeting of the citizens for the

purpose of taking further steps to do honor to the memory of General LEE.

Pursuant to the foregoing resolutions, passed by the City Council on the 13th instant, I do hereby order the bells of the Exchange and at the Police Barracks to be tolled during to-morrow, (Saturday) the 15th inst., from six (6) o'clock in the morning, to six (6) o'clock in the evening; and respectfully request the Ministers of the various Religious Congregations in the City to cause the bells of their respective Churches to be tolled between the hours named above, the stroke of the bells to be at intervals of fifteen (15) minutes.

And I do further respectfully request the citizens to close their places of business during to-morrow (Saturday), the 15th instant, and to meet in public assemblage, in the Long Room of the Exchange, at twelve (12) o'clock Meridian, for the purpose of adopting other measures in honor of the memory of General ROBERT EDWARD LEE.

And I do further, also, order all the offices of the City to be closed during to-morrow, the 15th instant.

[L. s.] Given under my official signature, and the Corporate Seal of the City of Savannah, this Fourteenth day of October, Eighteen Hundred and Seventy.

JOHN SCREVEN, Mayor.

Attest: JAMES STEWART, Clerk of Council.

It was ordered, also, by resolution, "That the Council Chamber, and the Staves of the Police Court, be draped in mourning for the space of thirty days.

The Wardens and Vestrymen of Christ Church were convened on the 13th instant and adopted the following resolutions:

CHRIST CHURCH VESTRY ROOM, }
SAVANNAH, GA., October 13, 1870. }

At a meeting of the Wardens and Vestrymen of Christ Church, Savannah, Georgia, held this day, it was unanimously

Resolved, That in the death of General ROBERT E. LEE, we recognize the inscrutable will of Almighty God, and reverently and submissively bow to the affliction with which he has seen fit to visit us. As a communicant of the Church, we feel that in his death we have lost a worthy member, and all of us a shining example.

Resolved, That in the absence of the Rector, the Bishop of the Diocese be requested to have appropriate Church services on the day of his burial, between the hours of eleven and twelve o'clock.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be furnished the Bishop, that they be published in the morning papers of our city, and that the public be invited to join in the services. The pews will be free on the occasion.

Extract from the Minutes.

W. W. LINCOLN, Secretary.

Saturday, the 15th of October, the day set apart for the obsequies of General LEE at Lexington, was observed in strict accordance with the Proclamation of his Honor, the Mayor. The bells were tolled from 6 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock in the evening, "The trappings and the suits of woe" were visible everywhere. The edifices of the Corporation, the houses and halls of the Fire Engine Companies, the hotels, the offices of the public journals, places of business and private residences, all were draped with

mourning. The people abandoned their secular pursuits and dedicated the day wholly and solemnly to the memory of the good and great man they mourned.

At 11 o'clock the Right Reverend John W. Beckwith, D.D., assisted by the Reverend Thomas C. Stanley, conducted a Memorial Service at Christ Church, in accordance with the action of the Wardens and Vestrymen on the 13th instant. The Ritual arranged for the occasion was in perfect harmony with the mournful circumstances of the day, of the very hour itself. Few, very few, among the worshippers at Christ Church that day will forget its deep solemnity ; its singular impressiveness, in unison as it was with the feelings which agitated every heart.

Equally well remembered will be the effective address of the distinguished Prelate. Before concluding the services he said :

He had understood that a general desire had been expressed that he should make some remarks touching the life and character of the deceased. He regretted this, for the reason that silence seemed to him the most proper. One who, for ten years, had attracted the attention of the civilized world, and won both its admiration and respect, had passed away. He was not only a leader of men, but a leader in our Israel. In the penitential prayers of that litany which he loved to use in the days of his own trial and sorrow, he had prayed so to live that when life ended he might "die the death of the righteous, and that his last end might be like his." This seemed to the speaker enough, but, as more was expected, he desired to impress upon the minds of the men of Savannah, and especially its young men, the fact that the chief glory of this great man was his child-like faith. He was a model for the young men of the South, fulfilling nobly his duty in every station of life to which he was called. He remarked upon the striking fact that every class of the

community seemed to be affected by General LEE's death: the soldier, the citizen, the gentleman, the christian—all deplored the event and felt the loss. He would impress upon the minds of his youthful hearers that the perfection of General LEE's character was due to his unwavering faith in his Saviour. He was a man superbly manly, and his character was a refutation of the rationalistic fancy that religion was a thing for women and children. It was the very crown of his manliness. Great as he was among men, and mighty in war, he considered it a privilege to come and kneel at this altar, acknowledge the Superior Power above him, plead his dependence, and stretch out his hand for its support. If the young men of the South would make him their model, they must lay the foundation which supported and strengthened his character—an humble, earnest *piety*. The Bishop then alluded to the blessedness of such a death as his, and asked, how precious, beyond all things, to him *now*, was that christian life? He spoke of the manner in which General LEE had exhibited his piety since the war—how patiently and uncomplainingly he had submitted to personal and national sorrows which were breaking his great heart; how steadfast had been his faith, and with what christian meekness he had endured his griefs and been silent.

After the benediction, the large congregation quietly and sadly dispersed, the male portion of it to the public meeting at the Exchange.

At 12 M. the citizens assembled in the hall of the Exchange. On motion of Captain John McMahon, the Chief Magistrate of the City, the Honorable John Screven, was called to the chair, and James Stewart, Esq., appointed Secretary.

The hall was densely crowded, and the assemblage of citizens without, seeking admission, was immense, insomuch that the meeting adjourned to Johnson Square. The proceedings were thus reported in the journals of the City :

The resolutions adopted at the last meeting of Council, together with the Proclamation of the Mayor, were read by the Secretary, when General A. R. Lawton moved that a Committee of thirteen be appointed by the Chair to prepare business for the meeting. On the adoption of the motion, the Chair announced the following Committee: General A. R. Lawton, Chairman ; General Joseph E. Johnston, Commodore Josiah Tattnall, General H. C. Wayne, Hon. E. C. Anderson, Hon. R. D. Arnold, Hon. Wm. B. Fleming, Wm. Hunter, Esq., Hon. Solomon Cohen, General G. Moxley Sorrel, Hon. E. J. Harden, General Henry R. Jackson, and Colonel R. A. Wayne.

After a brief interval the Honorable Chairman announced that the Committee were ready to report, and General Lawton, as Chairman, addressed the people in substance as follows :

MR. CHAIRMAN : The vast concourse here assembled warns the Committee that more was expected of them than is consistent with the solemn occasion. We are here at the very hour of the burial of our illustrious friend, and find our grief can bear no expression. We must, therefore, submit to it in silence. Your Committee present the following report :

Your Committee can find in the ordinary form of resolutions no adequate expression for the profound sorrow which oppresses the hearts of our people. Upon this, the burial day of General LEE, this grief can only be voiceless as the solemn procession which follows his remains to the grave. Feeling, however, that upon some future occasion a general demonstra-

tion should be made in consonance with the love and admiration so long and so deeply cherished by this entire community for the virtue, and the memory of the illustrious dead, they recommend the adoption of the following :

Resolved, That the Chairman of this meeting appoint a Committee of fifteen citizens to make suitable arrangements and select a proper person to deliver a eulogy on the life, character and services of the deceased, at such time and place as said Committee may appoint.

Resolved, That a copy of the proceedings of this meeting and of the City Council of Savannah on the occasion of General LEE's death be enclosed, by his Honor the Mayor, to Mrs. Lee, with the expression of the sympathy of our entire community on the melancholy occasion.

Pending the adoption of the report, at the suggestion of Alderman Nichols, General Henry R. Jackson was requested to address the meeting.

With evident feeling and in his most impressive manner, the General said :

MR. CHAIRMAN: I can conceive that there have been, nay sir, that there are, speakers competent to meet the requirements of an occasion like this. I, sir, am not of that number. Poets innumerable have sung of the Pleiad lost from the sky, but he must indeed have been a bold master who could have struck his lyre in the first darkening of universal nature. Poets may sing and orators speak to the memory of a great sorrow, but in its birth that sorrow must speak for itself. The tolling of bells, the hush of business, the silence of this vast concourse are the true eloquence of an occasion like this. I will not mar it by the utterance of impotent words."

General Joseph E. Johnston was then called for by the meeting and said :

MY FRIENDS: AS I was one of General LEE's early friends it is natural that you should wish me to say something on this melancholy occasion. But when the orators upon whom you have called confess themselves unable to speak, I am sure that you will excuse me too, who am not only unused to address public assemblies, but share very deeply the emotions inspired by the occasion. A great and good man has died, and no words can express the sorrow I feel for the event.

The report and resolutions were adopted unanimously.

In compliance with the first resolution the Honorable Chairman announced the following Committee of Arrangements, &c.: R. N. Gourdin, Esq., Colonel C. H. Olmstead, Colonel R. J. Davant, Jr., Alfred Haywood, Esq., Colonel A. M. Sloan, Captain George A. Mercer, General Robert H. Anderson, Dr. J. M. Schley, Colonel John L. Villalonga, J. D. Hopkins, Esq., Colonel William M. Wadley, Hon. William Schley, Captain John McMahon, Gilbert Butler, Esq., Henry Lathrop, Esq.

Judge Harden then moved that Council be requested to purchase a life size portrait of General LEE to hang in the Council Chamber. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously, after which the meeting adjourned.

On the 16th November the Honorable John Screven made the following communication to the public :

GENERAL R. E. LEE.

Report of Proceedings of the Committee appointed by the Meeting of Citizens held on the 15th day of October, 1870, in Memory of General Robert E. Lee.

MAYORALTY OF SAVANNAH, }
November 15th, 1870. }

FELLOW CITIZENS :

I have the honor to lay before you the following report of the proceedings of the Committee of Fifteen, appointed at the meeting of Citizens, convened on the 15th of October, 1870, in honor of the memory of General ROBERT E. LEE.

JOHN SCREVEN, Mayor.

* * * * *

SAVANNAH, November 14th, 1870.

TO THE HONORABLE JOHN SCREVEN,
Mayor of the City of Savannah :

SIR : The undersigned, the Committee appointed by your Honor under a resolution adopted at the public meeting which assembled in Johnson Square, on the

15th ultimo, with instructions "to make suitable arrangements, and select a proper person to deliver a Eulogy on the life, character and services of the late General ROBERT E. LEE, at such time and place as said Committee may appoint," beg respectfully to report through you to the community :

That the Eulogy will be pronounced by General A. R. Lawton, on the 19th day of January next, the birth-day of the lamented dead.

That General R. H. Anderson, Colonel C. H. Olmstead, Colonel R. J. Davant, Captain George A. Mercer and Captain John McMahon constitute a Committee, charged with the selection and preparation of a place suitable for the delivery of the Eulogy, with the arrangement of a procession and other ceremonies befitting the solemn and mournful occasion, and with all other matters and details connected therewith.

That the order of the proceedings for the 19th January will be duly announced in the journals of the city.

The Committee would respectfully recommend to your favorable consideration the following resolution adopted by them :

Resolved, That his Honor the Mayor be requested to correspond with the Chief Magistrates of the cities of the South, inviting their co-operation in an effort to establish the birth-day of General Lee as a Memorial Day, to be kept and revered hereafter by us and our children, on which, year by year, we may have held up before us the spotless character of the Christian hero.

They beg further to report that Colonel C. H. Olmstead, Captain George A. Mercer and John D. Hopkins, Esq., have been appointed a Committee to aid

your Honor in carrying the foregoing resolution into effect.

All which is very respectfully submitted.

ROBERT N. GOURDIN, Chairman,
C. H. OLMSTEAD,
R. J. DAVANT,
ALFRED HAYWOOD,
A. M. SLOAN,
GEORGE A. MERCER,
R. H. ANDERSON,
JAMES M. SCHLEY,
JOHN L. VILLALONGA,
JOHN D. HOPKINS,
WM. M. WADLEY,
WM. SCHLEY,
JOHN McMAHON,
GILBERT BUTLER,
HENRY LATHROP,

Committee.

The journals of the 13th January announced the following Order of Arrangements for the 29th instant :

ORDER OF ARRANGEMENTS

FOR THE

NINETEENTH DAY OF JANUARY,

Dedicated by the People of Savannah to the Memory of the late
GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE.

In obedience to the feelings of this community, a Eulogy will be pronounced on the Life, Character and Services of GENERAL LEE, by General A. R. Lawton, in the Theatre, at 12½ P. M., on Thursday, the 19th instant.

A procession, commanded by General Joseph E. Johnston, assisted by

Gen. Mansfield Lovell,	Gen. Joseph Finegan,
Gen. J. F. Gilmer,	Gen. W. W. Kirkland,
Gen. H. R. Jackson,	Gen. G. M. Sorrel,
Gen. A. H. Colquitt,	Gen. R. H. Anderson,
Gen. H. C. Wayne,	

each attended by two Staff Officers, (and all mounted,) will be formed in the following order, at 11 o'clock A. M., on South Broad street, the right resting on Drayton street :

1st. The Washington Cornet Band.

2d. The Police Force of the City.

3d. The Hon. the Mayor and Aldermen, attended by Municipal Officers.

4th. The Orator, escorted by the Committee of Arrangements.

5th. Commodore Tattnall and Staff.

- 6th. The Reverend the Clergy of all Denominations.
- 7th. Foreign Consuls and Strangers.
- 8th. The Members of the Press.
- 9th. The Officers, Soldiers and Seamen of the late Confederate Army and Navy.
- 10th. Benevolent, Friendly and Literary Societies.
- 11th. Citizens not members of particular Organizations.
- 12th. The Officers and Crews of Vessels in Port.
- 13th. The Saxe-Horn Band.
- 14th. The Fire Companies in uniform (without Engines and Apparatus,) under direction of the Officers of the Department.

The Professions, Societies, Companies, Parties, &c., named in this Programme are very respectfully invited to occupy the places assigned them in the Procession, and assist in the solemnities of the day.

To facilitate the arrangement of the Procession it is requested

That "The Reverend the Clergy," "Foreign Consuls and Strangers," "Members of the Press," and "Citizens not members of particular organizations," will assemble in their respective bodies on the pavement on the south side of South Broad street, between Bull and Drayton streets, at 10½ o'clock precisely.

That "The Officers, Soldiers and Seamen of the late Confederate Army and Navy" will assemble at the same hour in the Eastern Division of Wright (Court House) square, be organized by the senior officer present, and marched by him by the east walk of Bull street to South Broad street, and halted when the head of the column arrives there.

That "The several Benevolent, Friendly and Literary Societies" will move from their respective Halls to South Broad street, by 10½ o'clock, and occupy the pavement on the north side, between Bull and Drayton streets.

That "The Officers and Crews of Vessels in Port" will assemble in the West Division of Wright (Court House) square, and be prepared to move at 10½ o'clock. An officer will be detailed to conduct them into line.

That "The Chief of the Fire Department" will form his command under the trees in South Broad street, his right resting on Barnard street.

The Procession will move down Drayton to Congress street, through Congress to Whitaker street, up Whitaker to Liberty street, down Liberty to Bull street, and through Bull street to the Theatre.

The Dress Circle of the Theatre will be reserved exclusively for the ladies, who are requested to assemble in time to be seated before the Procession arrives. A Committee will be in attendance to conduct ladies to seats. The doors will be opened for their admission at 11½ o'clock precisely.

The Honorable the Mayor and Aldermen, the Reverend the Clergy, Commodore Tattnall and Staff, Foreign Consuls, General Johnston, his Assistant Generals, and their respective Staffs, Members of the Press, and the Committee of Arrangements will occupy seats on the stage.

The rest of the Procession will be accommodated in the Pit and Galleries.

Except for the admission of ladies, the doors will not be opened until the Procession arrives and is ready to enter the Theatre.

The Exchange Bell and the Bells of the several Churches will be tolled from 11 o'clock A. M. until the Procession enters the Theatre.

Captains of Vessels in Port are requested to display their colors at half-mast during the day.

It is respectfully requested that all places of business will be closed at and after 10½ o'clock A. M.

Programme of Proceedings at the Theatre.

Prayer—By the Reverend I. S. K. Axson, D.D.

Chorus—"All men, all things, all that has life and breath, sing to the Lord"—Mendelssohn.
By Volunteer Chorus.

Dirge—Composed in Honor of General LEE—Millen.
By Washington Cornet Band.

EULOGY.

Chorus—"Happy and Blest are they who have endured"—Mendelssohn's St. Paul. By Volunteer Choir.

Prayer and Benediction—By the Reverend J. M. Mitchell, D.D.

ROBERT N. GOURDIN,
Chairman of Committee.

R. H. ANDERSON,
Chairman Sub-Committee.

The apprehension was expressed that the honors about to be paid to the memory of General LEE had been deferred to too late a period ; that time had assuaged the grief, and the intensity of the public feeling evoked at the moment of his death. But the interest with which the "Order of Arrangements" was received by the community indicated that this fear was unfounded. Subsequent events demonstrated that it was.

The morning of the 19th January dawned with auspicious brightness on our fair city. There were evidences everywhere, at an early hour, that the heart of the people was in unison with the solemnities to which the day had been dedicated. The city wore again the habiliments of mourning ; people on the streets, of all classes, were sedate and grave ; places of business were closed at the hour prescribed, and the people repaired to the appointed place of assembly to take the part assigned them in the ceremonies of the occasion. No discontents, no haltings were visible anywhere, or in any one ; the duty of the day was to do honor to the memory of one very precious in our affections ; it was a duty very grateful to all, and self was forgotten in the offices of reverence and love.

At 11 o'clock the tolling of the bells announced the hour for the arrangement of the Procession. At half after 11 the formation was completed, under the direction of General Robert H. Anderson, acting Marshal.

At this juncture a change in the "Order of Arrangements" became necessary. A messenger from the Theatre reported the building already over-crowded with ladies, and a large concourse, still without, seeking admission. There was, to be accommodated also, the Procession, stretching along South Broad, from Drayton beyond Barnard Street, numbering some two thousand men, and the people, besides, hanging about

it, and on the streets. It was determined to abandon the Theatre and repair to Forsyth Park.

The expediency of the change was universally recognized, and when announced at the Theatre, the people and the "Volunteer Choir," assembled there, adjourned with cheerfulness to the Park.

Presently a great shout (the only sound heard in the city that day, save the solemn tolling of bells and strains of music to which the Procession moved,) announced the appearance of General Johnston, attended by the distinguished officers mentioned in the "Order of Arrangements." Passing up the line, amidst enthusiastic and continued demonstrations of honor and affection, General Johnston took his position at the head of the Procession. Conducted by him, the Procession then moved by the streets designated, to Bull, and by Bull to the Park, and entering by the main Northern gate, approached the stand from which the Eulogy was to be delivered.

Through the energy of Colonel Olmstead, in charge of the arrangements at the Theatre, the stand, notwithstanding the briefness of the notice, was prepared, and ready when the Procession arrived in the Park; the "Volunteer Choir" was established in a suitable position in front of the stand, and the large concourse of people disposed around.

The Orator, accompanied by the officiating clergymen, the Honorable the Mayor, and Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements, and by General Johnston and Staff, was conducted to the stand, and the Procession was arranged in the grounds around.

The proceedings, with a slight exception to be noticed presently, were in accordance with the Programme announced for the Theatre.

That great gathering of people in Forsyth Park, larger than any ever before known in Savannah, was very soon silent and still, when the Reverend Dr. Axson rose, and in fervent prayer to the Throne of

Grace implored the Divine Blessing on our city and people and on their proceedings that day.

Mendelssohn's impressive Chorus had been sung with effect, the Dirge was performed by the Band and the Eulogist appeared before his audience. It would be needless, if it was within the scope of this Record, to speak of the discourse pronounced by General Lawton. His fellow-citizens have stamped upon it the seal of their high approval; it is now the abiding record of their veneration for the lamented LEE.

The feeling which pervaded that vast assembly, numbering some eight thousand souls, was visible in its demeanor. It stood (for but few were seated) for full one hour and a half with attention fixed, steadfastly, on the Eulogist, absorbing each word and sentence which fell from his lips; excited and deeply moved, no loud applause (in discord with the solemnity of the occasion) rent the air; the theme of the speaker was sacred with his audience, and silence, profound, reigned throughout it.

But an incident was at hand to break this silence, and impress upon the scene the still deeper solemnity of a religious service. The task of the Eulogist was finished. It was announced that the Doxology would be sung in place of the Anthem appointed, and the audience was invited to unite in it with the Choir. Then the long suppressed feeling of the people had utterance, breaking forth in thanksgiving and praise to the Universal Father, the Giver of all good, and—

“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost”—

ascended to Heaven in one grand, solemn strain from hundreds of hearts and tongues.

The Reverend Dr. Mitchell concluded the ceremonies and services of the day with prayer, and a benediction :

“Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of those who depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity ; We give thee hearty thanks for the good examples of all those thy servants, who, having finished their course in faith, do now rest from their labors. And we beseech thee, that we, with all those who are departed in the true faith of thy holy Name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting glory ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*”

“Almighty and everlasting God, who dost govern all things in heaven and earth ; Mercifully hear the supplications of thy people, and grant us thy peace all the days of our life ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*”

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*”

Thus closed the day dedicated to the memory of ROBERT EDWARD LEE. It was kept as a Sabbath day. No noisy demonstrations, no pageantry marked its observances ; they were simple, without ostentation or parade, the unaffected expression of a people's grief.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SAVANNAH, 21ST JANUARY, 1871.

General A. R. LAWTON,

My Dear Sir:

I am instructed by the Committee of Arrangements to solicit for publication the Eulogy on the "Life, Character and Services of the late General ROBERT E. LEE," pronounced by you before the people of Savannah, assembled in Forsyth Park, on Thursday, the 19th inst. In complying with this request, you will respond to the wishes of the community.

Permit me to avail of this occasion to thank you, on behalf of the Committee, for the able and acceptable manner the duty imposed on you, through them, was discharged.

I am, my Dear^{*} Sir,

With high respect and regard,

Yours, Very Truly,

ROBERT N. GOURDIN,

Chairman of Committee, &c., &c.

SAVANNAH, 26TH JANUARY, 1871.

ROBERT N. GOURDIN, Esq.,

Chairman, &c.

My Dear Sir:

Your note of the 21st inst. was left at my office while I was temporarily absent from the city, and you will please pardon the delay in replying.

The Eulogy delivered by me, on the 19th inst., on the "Life and Character of General LEE," was prepared only to be *spoken*; and not with a view to its publication. Had it been pronounced in a suitable building, (as intended,) where all who were present could hear, I would have asked leave to adhere to a rule which I prescribed for myself long since—not to print that which was intended only for a *present audience*. But as circumstances, arising at the last moment, compelled the delivery of the address in the open air, I cannot refuse to comply with the wishes of the Committee, so kindly expressed in your note.

The manuscript is at your service.

With sincere regard,

I am, Very Truly Yours,

A. R. LAWTON.

EULOGY.

Nearly seventy-one years ago, in conformity with a resolution of the Congress of the United States, and a proclamation of the President—on the anniversary of the birthday of WASHINGTON—the people of every city, town, village and hamlet, assembled in public meetings, to testify their grief by suitable eulogies and public prayers, and render their heartfelt tribute of affection for the memory of the *Father of his country*. The grief was universal, and the testimonials such as could be claimed by him, who had given existence to a young Republic, of free and happy people. All that was said and done on that solemn occasion, was under the sanction and connected with the organization of a powerful government, which he had been chiefly instrumental in creating. The great captain and statesman of the generation in which he lived, he died a conqueror in the field, and the successful founder of an empire.

To-day, we meet to do homage to the memory of one, whose great struggles and trials in the field—with all his mighty efforts to accomplish what his and our hearts most desired—resulted in final disaster, and the surrender of the patriot armies which he led—who lived not to see any of the direct or material results accomplished to which these stupendous struggles were directed. With no government to announce his death, and no organization to preserve his memory, we are here to-day, my friends, summoned only by the spontaneous impulses of our hearts, to mourn the loss, and commemorate the virtues of

ROBERT E. LEE. The entire people of this Southern land mourn him with a sorrow all the more touching, for the pathos there is in the fallen fortunes of the truly great and good, and with a measure of respect, admiration and gratitude, such as have never been evoked from any people under the sun. At the hour of his death, without power, without place, the chieftain of a lost cause, yet was he the most illustrious and beloved personage of the age in which he lived—upon whom dearest hopes were confidently fixed in times of fearful trial and suffering, and when hope was gone, confidence, respect and veneration remained, intensified and illustrated by the utmost love and affection of this entire land. Such is the result of the life and death of General LEE; such is the spectacle presented by this assemblage of a sorrowing people!

Why is this so? What were the elements of his character, and what the events of his life; what had he done and suffered, which made him so truly great and good, and caused him to be respected, admired and beloved, beyond all other men of the century in which he lived? To find response to these enquiries, is the perilous task which your kindness has assigned me. While we must look to his own character, his own deeds, and his own virtues, for the true causes which combine to produce the results we now contemplate, and place him far above the necessity of appealing to heraldry or ancestry for his title to glory and renown, these influences are not to be disregarded; nor is the power of *race* to be lightly spoken of, even in the formation of such a sublime character as his.

Descended from an old and prominent family in England, one of whom passed over the channel with William the Conqueror, and another as first Earl of Litchfield, at the head of his company of Cavaliers, accompanied Richard Cœur de Leon, in the third Crusade, their armor may be seen in its appropriate place in the Tower of London, and banners surmounted by the

family arms found in the chapel at Windsor Palace. And from the settlement of Virginia to the present day, they have filled the highest offices, Colonial, State and Federal, in the Cabinet and in the field. But, perhaps, no one of this extraordinary family has given evidence of greater natural powers, or greater aptitude for public affairs, military and civil, than the immediate ancestor of General LEE, "Light Horse Harry" of the Revolution. Accustomed to think of him merely as the bold and dashing partisan leader, the favorite of Washington, the great support of Greene, we too often forget that he was also a consummate orator, and endowed with the most exquisite classical taste. His letters to his oldest son are full of the most beautiful classical allusions; and in one of them he discussed like a master, the sublime doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul. But above all did he inculcate *truth* and *self-command* upon his children.

With such an ancestry, and such a father, ROBERT E. LEE was born 19th January, 1807, at Stratford, in Westmoreland county, Virginia—the birth-place of many of the most distinguished men of that State. As he lost his father when he was but eleven years of age, his boyhood was passed under the influence and in the society of a tender mother. In due time he entered the military academy at West Point, and graduated in 1829, with the first honors of his class, and with a reputation so pure and stainless as to mark him for special honor in the future. Commissioned in the Corps of Engineers, the handsome young lieutenant promptly acquired such distinction as the quiet duties assigned to that branch of the army in time of peace rendered possible; while his social qualities and manly graces made him a prime favorite in every circle in which he moved. At the age of twenty-five he was married to Mary Custis, the great-grand-daughter of Martha Washington. In quietness and peace, performing every official, social and domestic duty, he led such a

life as his tastes affected and his duties permitted, unobserved and without ostentation, until the breaking out of the Mexican War in 1846. Assigned then to duty on General Scott's staff, in charge of the Engineer department, he had the first opportunity of displaying that marked capacity and matchless skill which afterwards culminated in the leader of the Confederate armies. And here was exhibited that stern devotion to *duty*, that true genius, always equal to the emergency, that cheerful endurance of privation and hardship, that modest gallantry, which placed him promptly in the foremost rank of his profession, and caused the finger of the army to be pointed at him as the man upon whom greatness had already set its seal—who must be called, in some emergency, to be the leader of the armies of the Republic. Three times breveted for distinguished services in Mexico, he returned home on the advent of peace to find himself already famous—the distinguished commanding General having declared, in the most conspicuous manner, that the glorious and continued success which crowned the arms of the United States in Mexico was owing, in a large measure, to the skill, valor and undaunted courage of ROBERT E. LEE. And even at that early day did General Scott announce, that it was his purpose to recommend LEE as his successor in the chief command, in the event of his death or inability to perform the duties of that high position. And yet his modesty was, if possible, more conspicuous than his reputation. Never elated, none could have learned from his conduct or conversation, that he had ever trod any other than the peaceful paths of social and domestic life.

*After a short lapse of time he was assigned to the distinguished and responsible position of Superintendent of the military academy at West Point; where he won for himself a reputation for administrative ability, firmness and courtesy in the discharge of duty,

and a capacity to meet all the exigencies of that *peculiar* government found only at West Point, of which any man might well have been proud. In a position so admirably adapted to his capacity, and within reach of all the refinements of social life, he might have remained during the residue of his days, for all that then appeared to the contrary. But when new regiments were added to the army in 1855, it found him only a captain of engineers, though a colonel by brevet, and the distinction he had won entitled him to the commission which was then offered, of lieutenant colonel of cavalry. With the true instincts of a soldier, he could not refuse the promotion tendered; though its acceptance involved a transfer from the social and domestic life he loved so well, to the life of a cavalry officer on the Indian frontier, far separated from home and friends. In cheerful and quiet discharge of these duties he was found, when those political troubles loomed up, and those events were about to transpire, which promptly elevated him from a position of comparative obscurity, to the very highest place among the most famous and renowned of the present century.

Opposing theories of government, and antagonistic constructions placed upon the Constitution, had early divided the people of the United States into two great parties, and the war between them had been angry indeed for more than forty years—the advocates of centralizing power, by the very possession of that power, first gradually, and then by rapid strides, gained upon those who struggled for the sovereignty of the States and the right of local self-government. Deaf to the admonitions of the fathers of the Constitution and to some of the mightiest arguments ever put forth in intellectual combat, this party, with an appetite for power, which “grew by what it fed on,” pressed on to the climax, which was reached in the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860. The States of the

South, when the fundamental law as established by their fathers had been violated, seeing no hope of redress—the mere *form* of government had become destructive of the ends for which it was established—resolved, in the exercise of sovereign rights, to withdraw from the league into which they had entered in good faith. The States thus withdrawing were denied the right to “depart in peace,” and on the first attempt at “*coercion*” by the Federal Government, the argument was exhausted, and there was a resort to arms.

LEE, a Virginian born and bred, all the traditions and glory of his ancestors, all the impulses of his noble heart, impelled him to share the fortunes and accept the fate of his native Commonwealth. An officer, 'tis true, of the Federal government, lent to that government by the State of Virginia ; and only so long as Virginia consented thereto. He had fought under its flag, and furnished his shining contribution to that track of glory left by the victorious march of its armies. Sad and painful indeed was the issue presented, but he did not hesitate a moment to tread the path of *duty* ; and decided at once not to remain in a position where he could be called upon to raise his hand against his relatives, his children and his home, and the grand old Commonwealth, to which his allegiance was due. He resigned his commission in the United States army (on the 20th of April 1861,) in a letter full of sadness and pathos, and tendered his services to his own Virginia. Placed at once in chief command of the forces raised by that State, when Virginia became one of the “Confederate States of America,” he was transferred, with all these troops, to the armies of the young Republic. He received the commission of full General in the army of the Confederate States ; and the prestige of his name, and the opinions already formed of his wonderful capacity for military command, at once marked him for the confidence and

the hopes of a gallant and struggling people. Insensibly to himself he stood up as one of those

“Men on whose shoulders at a moment's warning
The weight of weightiest interests was flung,
Who in the conflict can not shrink, or pause
Tho' for mere breath—and still must lift their crests
Knight like—and mid the clang and clash of blows,
Gigantic hold their fame up with firm hands
And a grand issue, grandly vindicate.”

He returned from the campaign in Western Virginia in 1861, bearing the heavy weight of defeat; and unappreciated by the people whom he had served. But no murmur escaped him, nor was any attempt made to shift the painful responsibility from his own shoulders to those of others. The service rendered in the autumn of that year, in organizing and fortifying, for the defence of the coast of South Carolina and Georgia, was of great importance. Recalled to Richmond in the spring of 1862, he became, for a short time, the military adviser of the executive government. And while cheerfully, and earnestly, in the discharge of duties, the most modest and least conspicuous which could attach to his rank, a severe wound deprived the Army of Northern Virginia of its distinguished commander; and Gen. LEE was assigned to that position on the 3d of June. When he assumed the command, he had had no connection whatever, by personal intercourse, or recent command, with the troops which composed that army. His military service thus far had excited no enthusiasm. On the contrary, the comparative obscurity to which the first fourteen months of the war had consigned him, caused some misgivings, and for a moment, whispers of discontent; although the greatest respect was entertained for his person, his character, and the reputation he had long since acquired, in subordinate positions.

The season for active operations was at hand. Indeed, the opposing forces were confronting each other

at the moment of his assignment to the command ; and the fearful responsibility of the leadership of the greatest army in the Confederacy, (the first he had ever commanded in the field,) was thrust upon him almost in the very midst of battle.

But all doubts were soon dispelled. Not a moment's time was lost. The most active preparations, the most thorough organization, the most complete plan of campaign, were definitely entered upon, as if "in the twinkling of an eye." And while McClellan was preparing for the grand movement, which was to place the stars and stripes above the Southern capitol, LEE waited not for the contemplated attack ; but decided himself to take the initiative. With lightning speed he hurried the Army of the Valley to his assistance, concentrated around Richmond all the troops subject to his command, turned the flank of the Federal commander, and struck such a series of massive blows upon the well appointed hosts of McClellan as to drive him from his base of operations, and force him to seek the protection of his gun-boats, far down the James River—giving to the "Seven Days' Fight," from Gaines' Mill to Malvern Hill, a place in the history of war among the most brilliant achievements of modern times, to General LEE a name and a rank among the great captains of the age, the fame of which soon filled both hemispheres, and to the patriots of this Southern land a feeling of hope and confidence, which served to encourage and sustain them so long as their banner floated in the breeze.

But the victories achieved in rapid succession from the 26th of June to the 1st of July, inclusive, which routed the army of McClellan, *and displaced its commander*, were but the beginning of this ever memorable campaign of 1862—from Cold Harbor to Fredericksburg. Only a few days are passed on the banks of the Chickahominy, in refreshing the shattered brig-

ades after these terrible conflicts, when another onward movement is in progress. Shall we follow him in that grand triumphal march, through Gordonsville and across the Potomac, feeling the strength of Gen. Pope and striking him a heavy blow at Slaughter Mountain, chastising him at Bristoe Station, and well nigh destroying his army in the bloody three days' of Second Manassas—putting to ignominious flight these mighty hosts and their boastful commander—striking one more blow at “Chantilly,” and driving him into the fortifications around Washington, where he also was deprived of command? Shall we cross and recross the Potomac? follow him as he captures Harper's Ferry, with its entire garrison and equipment, and confronting McClellan again (who re-appears upon the scene, a second time the favorite of his government,) with the Potomac in his rear, and nearly four times his numbers in his front, fought and won the battle of Sharpsburg?

Shall I tell you that he was even then not permitted to rest from his labors, but called to confront another army, and another “on to Richmond,” and another commander at Fredericksburg, who was now to crush the great rebel leader? and yet the signal victory achieved by our arms in December, 1862, would have been one of the most brilliant in the history of war, had it not been for those which preceded and followed it, achieved by the same commander. We would fain linger along this track of glory, to contemplate some of those wonderful combinations and grand achievements, by which he produced such amazing results with such limited resources, in a space of time so incredibly short. But where shall I begin, and where would I end, in opening to your view a picture so sublime?—events of such transcendent interest, combats so grand in the action, and so mighty in the results!

We all remember the Wilderness, and Spottsylvania, and second Cold Harbor, and the protracted siege of Petersburg. But we may not dwell on the thrilling details, the marches, the combats, the pitched battles—the solemn hour when battle is imminent, and the responsibility of a whole life seems crowded into a moment—when battalion after battalion is wheeled into line with the fearful silence of the grave; until the roar of artillery announces that thousands must now hurl themselves to their death—nor upon the brighter and more exhilarating hour of triumph, when shouts of victory rend the air and gladden the heart of the anxious commander—nor upon the matchless skill and foresight, with which marches are conducted, positions selected and defended, the plans and movements of the enemy anticipated and thwarted! and yet they constitute the life and services of General LEE.

Exacting the most rigid discharge of duty from the highest, he was kind, encouraging, and even tender, to the humblest, who performed well the part assigned him; the grand central figure of all, he was sublime in dignity and simplicity; secure in the love of those who went cheering at his bidding to do or die, he needed none of that ostentatious display, so often craved even by the most distinguished military chieftains. While in careful preservation of all the resources at command, in preparations for the hour of trial, in the prompt handling of troops in action—changing plans to meet the exigencies of the hour—he exhibited that capacity which won for him the confidence and the love of the army he commanded, of the government and people he served; and accomplished results, which, by the confession of all military critics, and the impulsive voice of the civilized world, placed him in the first rank among the great captains of modern times.

Let it not be suggested that this is extravagant praise of a military leader, who finally failed to achieve the material results for which he fought. For be it remembered that this has been the fate of not a few of the most illustrious men who have ever led battalions to victory ; or achieved that military renown which entitled them to the brightest page in history. That he who is without a peer in the science and practice of war, and stands forth in modern history without a competitor for the glittering prize, died a captive and a prisoner at St. Helena !

To pass judgment on the results of General LEE'S campaigns, we must compare the resources, in men, material and organization, of the two governments which sent the opposing armies to the field. He fought *against* a government of resources practically without limit ; with a population of its own so large, that there would seem to have been no call for added numbers from abroad. In diplomatic and commercial communication with all the world—with trade, commerce and material for war, scarcely inferior to any—and yet in a condition to draw men, money and material from all. He fought *for* a government in the very act of its first organization, and unrecognized by all other nations of the earth—of small population—chiefly agricultural—drawing its manufactured supplies from the very country against which it fought. Its ports blockaded against supplies from abroad ; even the material necessary for ordnance and transportation, were not to be found within its limits in any appreciable quantity ; and during the last two years of the war, the rations of the men, and the forage of the horses of his army, had to be transported by land from sources of supply five to eight hundred miles distant from the field of operations—and if the track of the intermediate railway, or the locomotive which passed over it, were even temporarily destroyed by the raids of the enemy, there was no material within

the limits of the Confederacy to replace what was lost—a condition of things never known before in the history of war; and the existence of which, as applicable to him, would have startled from his propriety the greatest military commander in Europe! Scarce of every thing, and with every thing of inferior quality, (except the noble patriot army that followed his banner,) he must, with painful caution, survey his resources, before undertaking any great movement.

Nothing in our condition has so surprised and confounded the intelligent observer in Europe. An English gentleman of large and varied experience, of high culture and social position, once said to a Confederate General: "There are some things about your remarkable war which we can understand, and some which we cannot. We can understand how one man may drive two or even three before him, under the tremendous impulse of daring and patriotism; and that masses of men, while under the influence of that *elan* which carried the Eagles of France so often to victory and to glory, and under the leadership and inspiration of a beloved, brilliant and enthusiastic commander, may achieve triumphs against fearful odds. But we cannot understand how one railway, one bar of iron, one locomotive, one horse, has been made to do the work of four. How, in articles of prime necessity, you are able to duplicate and even quadruple in the use, every unit in possession." And yet General LEE and his associate commanders were brought face to face with this problem; and were compelled to solve it, while contending against armies that were supplied *ad libitum* with all these things.

Even at this disadvantage, was the whole power of the United States foiled in its efforts to plant its standard on the capitol at Richmond, for four long years. And the army of General LEE stood proudly before it as an impassable obstacle—not removed, until he had first given battle against fearful

odds to McClellan, to Pope, to McClellan again, to Burnside, to Hooker, to Meade, and to Grant, and in succession gained signal victories over them all—not until three years of unequal yet successful conflict on every field, had driven these vanquished hosts to prey upon the homes of the peaceful inhabitants (where his army could not protect them), and to consume the entire resources of this Southern land—not until the mere weight of a succession of superior forces, and the continued effect of attrition, had produced the necessary physical result—not until there had been such destruction of human life as to sink into insignificance the greatest wars ever known in Europe—not until he had placed beneath the sod in Virginia a number of the enemy's troops equal to the largest force ever put into action by LEE—not until this gallant, patient, matchless army, was reduced to the small remnant of 8,000 men, did he yield to overwhelming numbers and resources!

And now we approach the closing scene of this eventful and heroic struggle. At last the lines were drawn so closely around General LEE at Appomattox, that nothing could be accomplished by further resistance. Had he consulted his own feelings and personal pride, he would gladly have hurled even this little fragment of his noble army, in proud defiance against the hosts of Grant; and relieved himself of the future by meeting a soldier's death. But neither the instincts of manhood, nor the calls of humanity, would permit him thus to trifle with life, when no further good was to be accomplished by the shedding of blood. Surrender was inevitable, and he approached it with all the dignity and grandeur of his character. Such a scene has rarely ever been witnessed on earth! Mark the deferential homage paid him even by the Federal soldiers, as with uncovered heads they contemplate the hero of a hundred battles, who had so often sent terror into their ranks, but now their

captive ! His own war-worn, battle-scarred heroes, with quivering lip and tearful eye, admiring and loving their chieftain with more tenderness in this the hour of his adversity, than even when they had surrounded him with the shouts of victory. He bade them an affectionate farewell, in language full of dignity, sorrow, and pathos ; and surrendered his sword to the Federal commander.

“Never a hand waved sword from stain so free,
Nor purer sword led a braver band,
Nor a braver bled for a brighter land,
Nor a brighter land had a cause so grand,
Nor a cause a Chief like LEE.”

Thus ended the military career of ROBERT E. LEE. And we challenge the annals of war to produce another so replete with glory and renown—so free from the stain of wrong or crime—so devoid of personal ambition or self-seeking—so precious to the memory of those who followed his standard !

Again we ask, what was there which made him so truly great and good ? which so concentrated upon him the most intense love and admiration, not only of his army, but of this entire people ? We may better illustrate than define, that wonderful combination of qualities which produced such happy results. An incident near Spottsylvania Court House tells us how inexpressibly dear to his soldiers the life of General LEE was, and how they would preserve it at all hazards—and tells us also *how* and *why* he won their hearts. The 12th of May, 1865, will be ever memorable for one of the most bloody and obstinate struggles in the annals of war. Scarcely had the grey tinge of morning begun to dispel the darkness of a damp and drizzly night, when, after three loud cheers had been given, known to be the precursor of a charge, and a brief scattering fire on the right of the line, was heard, our men were astonished and mortified to see troops

moving out of the works into the woods, in a direction which showed that the enemy had made a gap, and were pouring their concentrated masses through it—moving on our flank with great celerity, and driving all before them, in panic and confusion. Gordon's and Pegram's brigades were formed in an instant, in rear of and at right angles with the line of works. All saw that a fearful crisis was upon us. In this exigency General LEE rode forward in front of the line, and took position opposite the colors of the 49th Virginia Regiment. Not a word did he utter, but simply took off his hat; and as he sat on his charger, never was there a man so noble, or a spectacle so impressive. At this moment Georgia's gallant son, Gordon, seeing it was General LEE's intention to lead the charge in person, seized the reins of his horse; and, turning him entirely around, exclaimed: "General, these are Virginians and Georgians; have they ever failed you?" "They never will; will you, boys?" Loud cries of "No! no! no!" "General Lee to the rear!" "General Lee to the rear!" burst from the entire line, as with one voice: and, as one of the men forcibly led his horse back, Gordon gave the command: "Forward! Charge!" With a shout and a yell they dash on, through bog and swamp, briars and undergrowth, until the breastworks are reached, and then the shouts of victory, "hurrah! hurrah! the works are ours!"

Pardon another incident, given substantially as related by a distinguished member of General LEE's staff.* When the final assault was made on the Federal lines at Chancellorsville General LEE accompanied the troops in person, and as they emerged from the fierce combat they had waged in that tangled wilderness, driving the superior forces of the enemy before them, he rode into their midst. The troops were pressing forward in all the ardor and enthusiasm of

*Colonel Marshall.

combat. The white smoke of musketry fringed the line of battle, while the artillery on the hills shook the earth around. To add greater horror and sublimity to the scene, the Chancellorsville House, and the woods surrounding it, were rapt in flames. In the midst of this awful scene, General LEE rode to the front of his advancing battalions. His presence was the signal for one of those uncontrollable outbursts of enthusiasm, which none can appreciate who have not witnessed. One long unbroken cheer, in which the feeble cry of those who lay helpless on the earth, blended with the strong voices of those who still fought, rose high above the roar of battle, and hailed the presence of the victorious chief. He sat in the full realization of what soldiers dream of—*triumph*; and as I looked upon him, in the complete fruition of the success which his genius, courage, and confidence in his army had won, I thought it must have been from some such scene that men, in ancient days, ascended to the dignity of the Gods. But at that moment, when the transports of his troops were drowning the sound of battle with acclamations, a note was brought to him from General Jackson. Sitting on his horse, he handed it to me with directions to read it to him. The note made no mention of the wound which General Jackson had received, but congratulated General LEE upon the great victory. I shall never forget the look of pain and anguish that passed over his face, as he listened and thought of his wounded Lieutenant. With a voice broken with emotion he bade me say to General Jackson, that the victory was his and the congratulations were due to him. I know not how others may regard this incident, but for myself, as I gave expression to the thoughts of his exalted mind, I forgot the genius that had won the day in my reverence for the generosity that refused its glory.

One other incident will present the other side of the picture. On the 3d of July, 1863, the last assault of

the Confederate troops had been made on the heights of Gettysburg, and *failed*. General LEE, in the midst of his baffled and shattered battalions, as they sullenly retired from the brave attempt, with the painful consciousness that his plans had been frustrated, and that defeat and humiliation had overtaken his army ; in the presence of his troops, openly assumed the entire responsibility of the campaign, and of the last battle. One word from him would have relieved him from that responsibility ; but that word he refused to utter, until it could be spoken without fear of doing the least injustice. Thus in the supreme moment of triumph and the saddest hour of defeat, with a degree of self-abnegation, of which history furnishes no example, he rose high above the one, and superior to the other. Is it surprising that he so possessed the love and confidence of his troops, that one word from him could at any moment hurl them to their death ?

Even in the sad condition in which the South found itself after the surrender, there was work for LEE to do ; and he was not permitted to rest from his labors. In October, 1865, he was installed as President of Washington College ; there to devote the remainder of his days to the education of the young men of the South. And it would do injustice to his memory, to leave out that portion of his life devoted to the simple and useful duties of a teacher of youth ; because the acknowledgement of this service is necessary to the completeness of his fame. In no position did he more signally develop the great qualities that adorned his life. Indeed, some of the very greatest can only be fully understood, in the light of the serene patience, and the calm and quiet consecration of his latest years. The fame of this wonderful man had so spread over the area of civilization, that the temptation must have been strong, if he had nature in him, to mingle with the noble and renowned among men of the old world—where he would have been received with effusion by

the great and good of every class. Princes and sovereigns would have delighted to do him honor; and, with his grand reputation, and not less grand presence, he would have found only his peers, among those trained and educated amidst the refinements of courts and thrones. But no; *duty* was still his watch-word, "stern-voiced, ice-hearted duty." And in the sublimity, and yet simplicity, of his resolute nature, he brought his more than regal character, his majestic fame, all his intellectual and moral endowments, to the task of fitting those who should come after him, for the varied duties of life. In the honorable, but unobtrusive, occupation of a professor and teacher, he conferred enduring honor upon all the colleges and schools of the land; and by his choice, reflected glory upon every member of that profession. And further, he taught the sublime lesson to his suffering countrymen, that even the most exalted fame, and the well-deserved plaudits of millions, did not rescue him from the common lot of mankind, "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread." Nor did he reject, as unworthy of him, even the most common-place duties of life; nor would he receive any other support for himself or his family than that derived from just compensation for labor performed—and thus

"Each morning sees some task begun,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose."

At Lexington the great Southern leader intrenched himself upon the new battle-field of education and intelligence, and gathered around him the ardent youth of a new generation, and the spirits of the illustrious dead, for the redemption of his conquered country. Lexington is the capital on the column, otherwise incomplete, of a harmonious and beautiful patriotism. Thus in the discharge of that "*duty*," which he him-

self has said in a letter to his son, "is the sublimest word in our language," he continued to live until the end of his days.

But in this quiet and retirement his great heart was oppressed by the condition and the wrongs of his beloved South. He had expected from a powerful nation accepting the surrender of his sword, if not that magnanimity, at least that exercise of *policy*, which the extent of their achievements, and the practice of the great nations of the earth, would have dictated. He knew that in the palmy days of Rome no triumphs were decreed for the results of civil wars, but every effort used to gain the vanquished by benefits conferred, and thus admit them again into the great Roman family. And thus had Rome presented the imposing spectacle of "a city which becomes a people, and a people which embraces the world."

But neither magnanimity, nor the lessons of history, could produce such a result, with the government that accepted his surrender.

History gives us no account of a more unhappy people than were ours, after the close of the war. Their cause was lost, their liberties gone, the whole surface of the country spotted over with the graves of their martyred dead; their motives aspersed, their character maligned, their families broken up, their homes desolate, their churches desecrated, their towns burned and pillaged, their fields lying waste, and their children starving; and the future so dark and uncertain as to shed no light upon the cheerless present. The keenness of the anguish which he felt was aggravated and intensified, not only by demonstrations of the ardent love which this people bore him, but by that *silence* which he imposed on himself, for example and policy, and which was sometimes mistaken for a want of thorough appreciation of the wrongs under which we suffered. As he looked with painful anxiety to the future, there was a glimmer of hope that

material prosperity might yet return to this stricken land ; that the waste places might be again made glad, and a generous soil once more reward the labor of the husbandman. His imagination might see, for his children if not for himself, the valleys of his beloved South once more covered with waving corn, and once more the "cattle upon a thousand hills." And as he thought upon the hecatombs of those he loved, who had been sacrificed to constitutional freedom, and the blood of his kinsmen and his friends, yet smoking amid the desolations of his home, his bereaved friendship was consoled by the faith which points to the Eternal Morning—and the voice of the Redeemer of mankind, which says, "Thy brother is not dead, but sleepeth," taught him to look for reunion in the hopes of immortality. But his suffering patriot heart could find only *despair* in the lessons of history. Freedom once abused by a people, dies and has no resurrection. A farewell once taken is too often sad and final, and we are left to abide our doom in stolid resignation. Such was the picture presented to his mind by the condition of the great American Republic ; and the bitterness was only increased by the fact that the mass of those who controlled her destiny were blind to her real condition.

"To mute and to material things
New life revolving summer brings,
The genial call dead nature hears,
And in her glory reappears ;
But, oh ! my country's wintry state,
What second spring shall renovate ?"

The cold steel had entered his heart, and pierced it to the core. Grandly he struggled, but gradually he sunk, under the weight of suffering, mental and physical. A disease contracted as far back as the campaign of 1864, was slowly but surely undermining a constitution well nigh as remarkable as his mental and

moral endowments. Possessed of extraordinary manly beauty, both of face and form, he had a strength of body and a capacity for action, for endurance of hunger, fatigue and exposure, which has rarely ever been equaled. He struggled to the last, and never succumbed to disease, until actually stricken down in the very discharge of a specific duty. From the first no rational hope was left to his friends: and amid the tenderest care of his sorrowing family, after the expiration of but a few days, (during which no word of complaint ever escaped him,) he breathed his last on the 12th of October, 1870.

“Joy, joy, my task is done,
The gates are passed, and heaven is won.”

The cares of time are exchanged for the joys of eternity—the laurel wreath for the amaranthine crown.

The first sensation produced by the news of General LEE's death can never be forgotten, but may not be described. Confined to no sect, or class, or latitude, the news flashed across the Atlantic, and claimed the most marked attention, even amidst the clash of arms on that side of the ocean. And the unmistakable estimation in which his exalted character was held by all true men, North and South, exhibited to us the first ray of hope that a returning sense of justice was at hand. So intense was the feeling, and so decided the demonstrations, that even they who would not join in the outburst of sorrow were content to remain silent. Never before did the quaint but pointed language of Jeremy Taylor, uttered more than two hundred years ago, more fitly apply to the life and death of any man: “He lived as we all should live, and died as I fain would die. Such was his death, that he did not die too soon. And his life was so useful and so excellent, that he could not have lived too long—Death consecrates and makes sacred that person whose excellency was such, that they who are not displeased at the

death cannot dispraise the life—but they that mourn sadly, think that they can never commend sufficiently.”

Time and capacity would fail me in any attempt at a thorough analysis of the character and endowments of this extraordinary man. But we are content to accept him as the representative of this people, and of the temper with which this whole Southern land entered into that gigantic struggle, which has closed to us in grief. We accept him as the representative of this same land, in the spirit of retirement from the struggle—in the dignity of that retirement—in the attitude of quiet submission to the conquering power with its arbitrary exactions—but without receding from those great principles which were embalmed in that struggle. “There are men all over this land who are sleeping upon memories as holy as death, and amid reproach appeal to the future, and to the tribunal of history, for the vindication of our cause,” and whatever may be glory, or the material civilization of the conqueror, truth is still immortal and must prevail.

“Ah, realm of tears—but let her bear
This blazon to the end of time—
No nation rose so white and fair,
None fell so pure from crime.
The widow’s moan, the orphan’s wail,
Rise round thee—but in *truth* be strong:
*Eternal right, though all else fail,
Can never be made wrong.*”

There is an expressive English word which describes the assemblage of many real virtues, of many qualities approaching nearly to virtues, and a union of manners, at once pleasing, and commanding respect—the word *gentleman*—which is so often flippantly misapplied, that we have almost lost sight of its real import. We accept General Lee as the highest type of the Southern gentleman—that combination of courage, courtesy, and culture, of truth and kindliness, with a scrupulous and sensitive regard for the rights

and feelings of others. No ribald jest ever escaped his lips; nor did he ever utter a word injurious to truth, decency, or to another's peace. He was ever as mindful of the gentle courtesies, and sweet charities of life, in his intercourse with woman, and even with little children and humble people, as he was easily at home amid the grander scenes of social and official intercourse, with the wise, the great, and the honored of the land.

We honor and revere him as the incarnation of duty—of dignity, temperance, and virtue—of unaffected modesty and genuine humility—of industry, patience, fortitude, and resignation—a character so grand in its proportions, so complete in all its details, so exquisite in its finish, that when we contemplate it, like the visitor who first looks on the cathedral of St. Peter's, its very perfections, symmetry, and completeness, obscure our capacity to appreciate its vastness.

We love and honor him, because he lived not for himself, but for others; and illustrated by his entire life, that complete self-abnegation only witnessed in the best days of the Roman Republic—and in a venal epoch, which discards as unworthy all that does not minister to material interests, we are once more thrilled with the blessed realization that man was indeed made but “a little lower than the angels.” This forgetfulness of self and regard for others, was manifested by his habit of turning over to the hospitals for the suffering sick all the delicacies sent to his headquarters by his friends and countrymen—by his refusal to accept from the city of Richmond a dwelling house, tendered to himself and family in grateful recognition of his public services, at a time of his greatest successes, and our highest hopes. These he declined on the ground that his necessities were not so great as the suffering army. This noble trait was even more signally illustrated by an incident which occurred about a year before his death, the only one within my own special personal

experience, which I will ask leave to relate. In the summer of 1869, a gentleman whose large fortune was only equalled by his readiness to co-operate in every good work, proposed a scheme for an investment to be placed at the disposal of General LEE, which would (as far as human foresight could provide,) place beyond contingency the material comfort of himself and his children after him. The only obstacle was the absence of General LEE's consent, and I was requested to act as the medium of communication with him. The plan itself had been conceived, and was intended to be executed, with the utmost delicacy, and no effort was spared to use like delicacy in making it known to him. Full of grateful emotion, he protested, that all his wants were supplied, and that these kind intentions should be executed in bestowing benefits upon the truly needy. I attempt not to repeat his words, but his reply, full of dignity, appreciation, and tenderness, was so marked and decisive, as to make it impossible to renew the subject, without positive intrusion. I had seen him on the eve of great battles, with calm possession of himself, when he stood as upon the very brink of the grave, with the stillness of death all around him—I had seen him amid the dust and smoke of battle, with majestic mien, anxiously surveying the yet doubtful conflict—I had seen him in all the glory of victory just achieved—but never before so grand, so noble, so entitled to reverence and love, as in that quiet, retired moment, when, with grateful heart and moistened eye, he gave thanks for the intended kindness, but declined the proffered gift.

To this assemblage it is not without interest to remark, that the first service of the young Lieutenant of Engineers, after his graduation at West Point, was in the city and harbor of Savannah, where he contracted early friendships and social relations, which continued through life, and left an impression upon society which has ever since been cherished. And when, in the last

year of his life, his physicians and the faculty of his college united in a request, almost a *demand*, that he should leave his duties for a short season and seek the restoration of his health, he sought the climate and the society of Savannah for that purpose. None of us can forget the interest attached to that visit. With every effort made to avoid public demonstration, the feelings of our people could not be restrained, and though it was arranged with the city authorities and his personal friends, that he should come entirely as a private individual, the unorganized mass of our people impulsively assembled on his arrival and gave him a spontaneous reception, more grateful than a Roman triumph! Noble guest! Honored community!

And here, too, we enjoyed the rare privilege of witnessing quiet, social, and affectionate intercourse, between the two great commanders of the Confederate armies. Friends from earliest youth, each knew well the true manhood and exalted merits of the other; and each with soul too great to abate one jot or tittle of the fair fame of the other. While their intercourse was marked by simplicity and affectionate regard, the spectacle was sublime! He who had selected this community for the pursuit of his peaceful and unobtrusive avocation, was among the first to greet his brother chieftain on arrival, and the last to bid him farewell at his departure. In this presence I may not speak in fitting terms of one who (thank Heaven!) is still among the living. But I may not forget that, though living, he belongs to history and to fame. Not to institute comparison or parallel—and craving pardon of that true modesty which always encircles the really great and good—I pronounce together the names of LEE and JOHNSTON—twin heroes of the cause we love so well—the joint recipients of our utmost respect, admiration, and affection!

The association of these historic names, naturally recalls that other great Virginian—the silent, grim

warrior, victor of an hundred fields—that dazzling meteor which appeared in the heavens at the opening of our struggle, and alas, too soon went out in glory! gazed on with admiration by his countrymen, and with dire alarm by his enemies—putting to flight, in the short space of forty days, four separate armies, and closing a campaign in the valley, of which Hannibal might have been proud—while he ascribed all the glory unto the God of Battles—then dying in the arms of victory, at the moment when he had performed the mightiest of all his mighty deeds.

Was ever such group presented before? Virginia, name ever dear to the Southern heart! Oh! Virginia! Mother of statesmen and heroes! was not thy quiver already full, before these the younger of thy illustrious sons were given thee? E'en in thy sorrow and sadness, thy homes all desolate, and thy land all smoking with the blood of thy children, the proudest nation of the earth might fain accept thy fate, as it gazes upon thy crown of glory with these added triple jewels!

And as national character so expresses itself in individuals born to be representative men, we accept these as exemplars of the race to which we belong, and hold them up as a triple shield against the shafts of malice, detraction, or misrepresentation, from whatever quarter they come. . And to-day, in the presence of high Heaven, we present their names in solemn and lofty protest—LEE, JOHNSTON, JACKSON—their names, their lives, their characters, their deeds—and appeal to the civilization of the age, to the lovers of truth and manhood everywhere—against the ascription of dishonor, treachery, or aught that is ignoble, to them, to us, or to our cause.

In a paper, which has not appeared in print, a literary friend, of this city,* has traced, with rare felicity, the wonderful and singular harmony that

*Mr. Bogart.

exists between the two finest characters the New World has produced. "Though Washington and LEE had no blood connexion, their birth-places, their families, and their histories are strangely associated. It is a sufficiently surprising coincidence that the two foremost Americans should both have been Virginians; but when we reflect that, separated in their births by exactly three-quarters of a century, they were yet born within ten miles of each other, in the same county; that both sprang from pure English families of high social position, and intimate with each other; that each was the child of a second marriage; that both losing their fathers at just eleven years old, were yet early trained in habits of truth, honor and religion, and were commended even in childhood for the usual virtues that underlie all good character; that both grew up high-toned and honorable men, modest and retiring, yet full of moral courage, and followers of duty; with characters well matched in dignity, loftiness and integrity—exemplars of every public virtue, and every private good—diffident, yet self-reliant, distrustful of self, yet never disappointing the trust of others; that both adorned their manhood by a religious profession and a religious life; that both are, at *home*, proudly recognized exponents of Southern sentiments and Southern character, and *abroad*, are admired for all that is good and great; that both, alike soldiers and civilians, strove with equal zeal and like purpose, but with unlike obstacles and unequal success, for the right of self-government; each the leader of the armies of a struggling people, the one the vindicator of political liberty, the other no whit inferior, because he only *deserved* success; that now in death their names, equally dear to our hearts, are united in the name of the 'Washington-Lee University;' endowed by the one, and by the other resuscitated to more than its former life; that while thus one in spirit and character, affinity has

established a new bond of union, in the fact that Mrs. Lee is the great-grand-daughter of Mrs. Washington; that Lee's progenitors were the worthy associates of Washington in the Revolutionary struggle; that Washington's most beloved officer in that war was LEE's father—a favorite whom he took to his heart in his youth, and pushed forward far beyond the merit of his years—and that when the death of the *Pater Patriæ* was first honored by public ceremonial, it was this same favorite that Congress chose to express its public eulogium; when we reflect on these multiplied evidences we shall cease to wonder that these two—*Par nobile Fratrum*—are, by a marvellous unity of character, enshrined in our hearts forever."

It was the remark of Lord Brougham, that "the advance which any nation may hereafter make in civilization will be measured by the veneration it pays to the name of Washington." And now, as the grave of our lamented hero-friend is bedewed with the most tender and sacred tears ever shed upon a human tomb, we do honor to ourselves, and to the land which he served, when we swear to cherish his fame, his deeds, and his example, as the noblest heritage to which Hope can cling. While a people are animated by such sentiments, and hold aloft such an example, their virtues can never die. And as we mourn over the grave of our beloved chief, let us cling to the stricken land he served so long and loved so well. Let us in our daily life respond to the beautiful words of our own poet-priest:

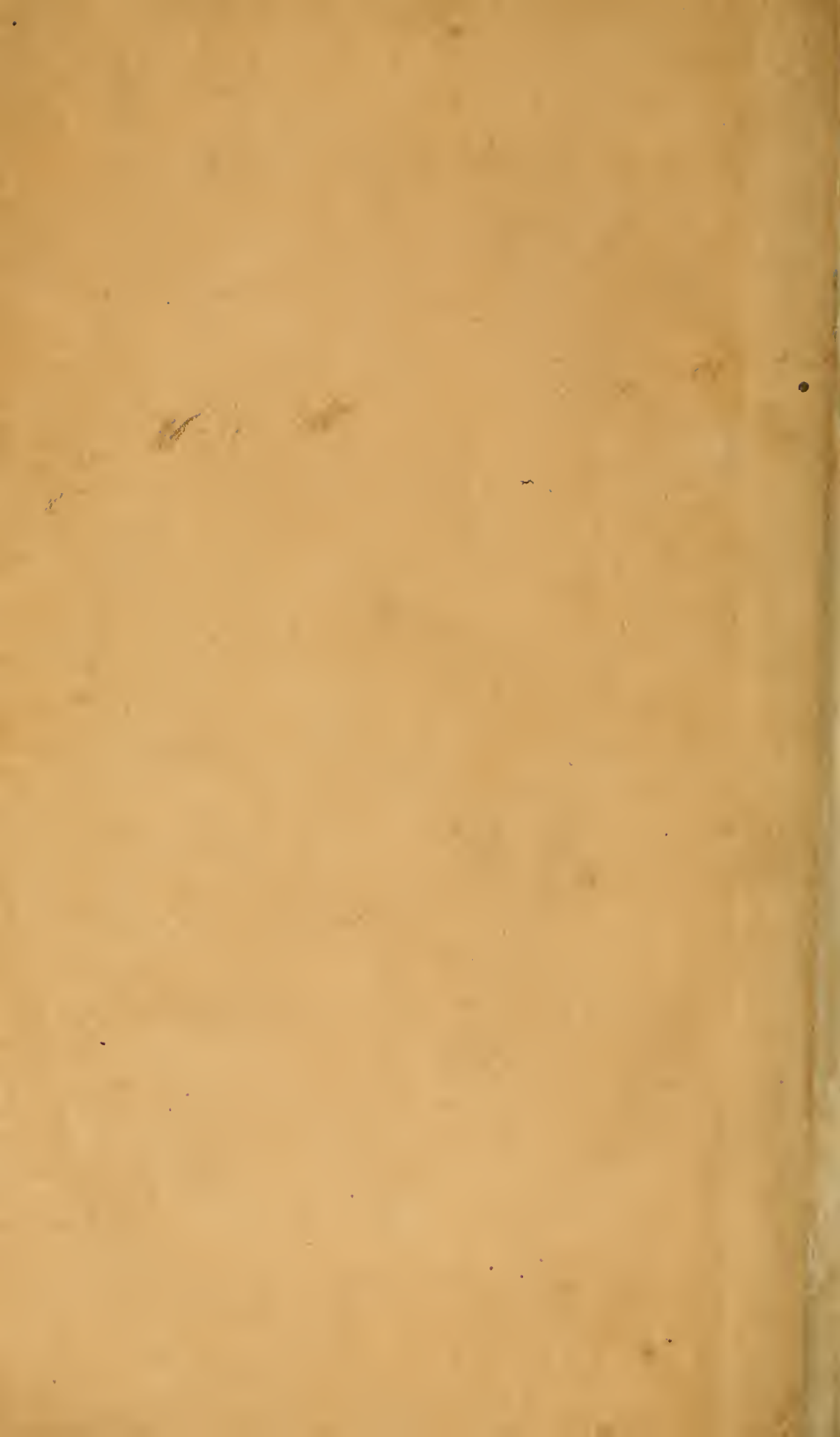
"A land without ruins is a land without memories; a land without memories is a land without liberty. A land that wears a laurel crown may be fair to see, but twine a few sad cypress leaves around the brow of any land; and be that land beautiful and bleak, it becomes lovely in its consecrated coronet of sorrow, and wins the sympathy of the heart and of history. Crowns of roses fade, crowns of thorns endure. Cal-

varies and crucifixes take deepest hold of humanity. The triumphs of might are transient, they pass away and are forgotten; the sufferings of right are graven deepest on the chronicles of nations."

But his name and fame will survive while history lasts; even though a stricken and impoverished people shall not be able to respond in monumental marble to the promptings of their hearts, and raise to him a fitting shaft, whose top shall pierce the skies. The voice of the civilized world has been heard, and the universal feeling is in accord with the sentiments promptly uttered by a conspicuous organ of public opinion in England: "A country which has given birth to him, and those who followed him, may look the chivalry of Europe in the face without shame; for the fatherlands of Sydney and Bayard never produced a more noble soldier, gentleman, christian, than ROBERT E. LEE."

In the memorial fields of history, where the records of great deeds are so preserved as to impart to them somewhat of the essence of eternal life, the fame of our illustrious chief will derive fresh lustre from the lapse of time. There the germ of this pure renown has already grown to the beautiful form and proportions of the *laurel* of our sunny clime. Enriched by the ashes of the patriot dead, and watered by the tears of a grateful people, its roots take firmer hold, its trunk rises towards Heaven, its branches spread wider and wider, inviting to shelter in its refreshing shade. Through its myriad leaves of deepest green and flowers of spotless white, all glistening in the sunshine, there is wafted to us on every breeze the airs of sweet music and the charms of delicious odors. And as we gaze and listen, its sunlight is the smile of God, its airs the airs of immortality !





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